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PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION IN PAKISTAN PANJAB

By C. SHACKLE

IT MAY simply be a reflection born out of envy, but the most successful schemes of linguistic classification do seem to be produced either for the remoter parts of the third world at a purely oral level of culture, or for countries like those of Europe with highly developed standard languages and intensively mapped local dialects.

At all events, neither of these favourable conditions applies in Pakistan Panjab. This is one of those awkward areas at that fascinating intermediate stage of socio-linguistic development, where related spoken dialects have for some time also furnished media for literary expression, but where these literary vehicles have yet to crystallize firmly into one or more standard languages, although – at least in the eyes of their more fervent rival protagonists – this final transformation of status is about to be imminently, if variously, realized. In other words, problems of classification, troublesome enough in themselves, have become further confused by getting embroiled with the linguistic politics of provincial and sub-provincial nationalisms.

As if this were not enough, Pakistan Panjab is also a part of the Indo-Aryan area where the absence of firm linguistic frontiers anyway makes classifications notoriously difficult, and is a region where – for both historical and economic reasons – there is a severe shortage of local resources and trained specialists to carry out the basic research needed to answer many questions of detail. Add to this the encumbrance of an awkward scheme of classification which fails to take adequate account of historical patterns of language use and is based on a very partial assessment of some modern features only, and one has all the ingredients for confusions which are sufficient to cast a dense fog over the area for those who are not specialists, and a fairly thick haze for quite a few who are!

It is certainly not my intention to try to bring total order out of

chaos here. Such a task would hardly be possible in a field where the workers are so few. What I shall be doing is to look at some of the problems from three different aspects. I want first to give a general account of the background to present confusions, then to suggest a convenient working terminology (rather than any tidy overall classifications), and finally to look at some interesting points of detail, worth considering either because they have been used to support schemes of classification in a way that does not seem properly justified, or because they suggest different patterns of systematic adjustment from the few which have so far been considered.

1. It is, of course, a commonplace observation of elementary linguistics that no one writes as he speaks, but in the Indian subcontinent the dichotomy has traditionally been maintained in a characteristically extreme form, as most obviously shown by the remarkable prolongation of the life of Sanskrit as a literary language and the generally late emergence of the NIA languages to fully standard status in the modern sense.

The Panjab came under Muslim rule as a consequence of the invasions from Afghanistan in the 11th century, and so it was Persian which was established as the formal standard language of the province for some 800 years, until the British conquest in the 1840s. This meant that there was only a very restricted literary role for locally spoken languages, and consequently no attempt to standardize, describe or classify them. There are, however, quite plentiful written records from the 17th century.

The first reliable records of a local literary language are found in the Sikh scriptures or *Ādi Granth*, completed in 1604. This contains a large number of 16th century verse texts of diverse authorship written in the Gurmukhi script. The very mixed character of the language of the *Ādi Granth*, with its prominent Old Hindi element, should not be allowed to obscure the fact that these scriptures provide the best available evidence for Old Panjabi. A similar language is also found in slightly later verse texts of lesser canonical status, and some prose hagiographies. But, from the later 17th century, Sikh writings were mostly compiled in the influential eastern literary vehicle of Brajbhāṣā (though still written in the sacred Gurmukhi script), or sometimes in Persian.

Muslim writing was naturally mostly in Persian, but a local Muslim

literature also begins to be attested from the 17th century. This is of a more or less popular character, all in verse, and is written in the Persian script, which is naturally far less satisfactory than Gurmukhi as a record of Panjabi sounds. This tradition of Muslim literature has continued unbroken: but the earlier examples, lacking the sacred status of the contemporary Sikh texts, have been much less reliably transmitted. It would, however, appear that an earlier composite literary language, based on several of the dialects of present-day Pakistan Panjab, was gradually replaced – during the collapse of centralized imperial authority in the 18th century – by at least two fairly distinct literary vehicles with narrower dialectal bases, a central language based on the Lahore area, and a south-western based on the Multan area, also cultivated to the south in Sind under the name Siraiki, in parallel with Sindhi. It would, though, naturally be inappropriate to speak of consciously differentiated literary languages at this stage: and contemporary writers usually refer to their language by the traditional Indo-Muslim terms 'Hindī' or 'Hinduī', that is, 'Indian' as opposed to 'Persian'.

Traditional patterns of language use at first survived the incorporation of the Panjab into British India in the 1840s, except that Persian was replaced as the official language of the province by Urdu, and at the highest levels by English. But local conceptions of the relative status of different kinds of language were gradually to be altered in the changed circumstances of imperial rule.

An immediate consequence of the British annexation was that English-speakers had to communicate with Panjabi-speakers, and the practical requirements of officials and missionaries were met by the production, in English, of the first grammars and dictionaries of Panjabi. The eastern dialect of the Ludhiana area was taken as standard in these works, since this was the first to come under British rule. It had never achieved any literary prominence, but this was hardly of concern to the users of these pioneering studies, since their needs were for oral communication with the illiterate (except in the specialized instance of Bible translations and other Christian literature). The British Ludhiana standard was, moreover, sufficiently intelligible to be of use in the central areas of undivided Panjab also.

In the western regions, however, the differences of local dialects were much greater, and this stimulated the production of a number of separate descriptive works for these western dialects by locally-

stationed officials and missionaries in the later years of the last century. The most important include O'Brien's glossary of the Multani of Muzaffargarh, later revised by Wilson on the pattern of his own grammar and dictionary of Shahpuri, articles by Bomford on Multani, and Jukes's dictionary of the 'Jatki' of Dera Ghazi Khan.[1] All these studies contain much useful material, some of it still unsuperseded, but linguistic sophistication – especially in the crucial matter of accurate transcriptions – was only introduced after the turn of the century by Grahame Bailey, in his excellent studies of the Panjabi of the Wazirabad area, and shorter descriptions of some less widely distributed sub-Himalayan dialects.[2]

All these studies were based on the speech of peasants, though often as mediated through local subordinates in the official hierarchy, and make little or no reference to any traditions of literary usage. It must also be remembered that, even at that period, the 'dialects' being described might have several million speakers, and that these correspond to what would be considered massive dialect-groups in the more intensively mapped areas of Europe. Even at this level (to which we are still generally confined by the data) these earlier writers were not generally equipped to offer classifications of their material in relation to one another, although it was certainly realized that what were usually called 'Western Panjabi' dialects were very different from those of the centre and east, occasionally, indeed, rather recalling Sindhi.

It was thus left to Grierson to draw these earlier studies together in the *Linguistic Survey of India* (whose relevant volumes appeared in 1916 and 1919), and to combine them with the generally much inferior material he was able to acquire through official channels to produce the first comprehensive classification.[3]

As the first linguistic cartographer of the area, Grierson had the great advantage of working at a time when the Panjab was regarded as the home of rustic dialects hardly subjected to literary cultivation, and when conscious local linguistic identifications had still not emerged. He was thus able to treat the Panjab as a *tabula rasa* on which to draw his own classificatory scheme, which derived very neatly from his grand conception of the NIA languages as being divided into a conservative 'Outer Circle' and an innovating 'Central Group' whose speakers had at some time overlaid much of the area previously occupied by those of members of the 'Outer Circle' and pushed them back to the periphery.

So the distinctions between western and central dialects, previously only casually noted, were reified in Grierson's scheme into a distinction between two languages, the one called 'Lahnda', after the Panjabi word for 'west', the other 'Panjabi'. Grierson was careful to point out that the two were separated by the least clearly defined linguistic frontier in India, so that Bailey's Wazirabadi is described as 'Panjabi merging into Lahnda'. But Lahnda – essentially a construct of Grierson's, though he was not the inventor of the term[4] – is classed as a pure example of the 'Outer Circle', and is described in the same volume as Sindhi, whereas Panjabi is classed as a language of the 'Central Group', most closely related to its eastern neighbour, Western Hindi (which of course includes Urdu), although still retaining some 'Outer Circle' features in common with Lahnda.

While Grierson classified all the dialects of Panjabi (except Dogri) together, he felt impelled to make further subdivisions within Lahnda, into a Southern, a North-Eastern and a North-Western group. For the Southern group he took as his standard Shahpuri, for which he had the best description (in Wilson's grammar). His classification of the much less well described dialects of the more broken country above the Salt Range was rather more awkward, since the North-Western group was conceived as having resulted from the irruption of a wedge of Southern features having burst over the Salt Range to divide the North-Eastern group into an eastern and a western division.

If only in view of the continuing status of the *LSI* as an arbiter for local disputes and as the primary authority for linguists who are not themselves specialists in Indo-Aryan, it is perhaps worth pointing out that Grierson's distinctions were based on quite rough-and-ready criteria. Apart from differences in common items of vocabulary, and a few attempts at phonetic differentiations, in both of which Grierson was frequently misled by the poor quality of his sources, he relied chiefly on a few morphological features. Thus Lahnda was collectively distinguished from Panjabi by the use of internal vowel-alternation in some classes of disyllabic nouns to distinguish gender and case, the presence of a distinctive form of the past auxiliary, the retention of many irregular past participles, the non-periphrastic formation of the passive, the sigmatic formation of the future, and the extensive use of pronominal suffixes with verbs. Northern Lahnda was distinguished from Southern mainly by the extended singular oblique of the consonant declension, and North-Eastern from North-

Western by the use of /nã/ for /da/ as the possessive postposition and typical termination of the present participle. While most of these distinctions are valid so far as they go, they are collectively far from comprehensive, so that there has been ample scope for later challenges to Grierson's scheme.

The magnitude of his labours seems to have inhibited later British officials in the area from feeling that they had anything further to contribute, but the last decades of British India did see some important studies by trained local linguists, all Hindus as it happens. B. D. Jain made some useful observations, both historical and phonetic, comparing Wazirabadi with Ludhiani, although he was mainly concerned with the latter: and P. Bahl wrote an illuminating thesis on the phonetics and historical phonology of the voiced implosives of Multani, showing their spread to be much wider than Grierson had supposed.[5] Siddheshwar Varma's lengthy article on 'The phonetics of Lahnda' is chiefly concerned with his own northern dialect of Kahuni, but also, while accepting Grierson's distinction between Lahnda and Panjabi, questions his internal classification of the former, suggesting a triple division into Northern, Central (Shahpuri) and Southern.[6] A similar classification is suggested, if not explicitly, in Hardev Bahri's superb studies of the phonetics and historical phonology of the nearby dialect of Awankari, including its sub-dialects, later published in two volumes with the misleadingly comprehensive titles of *Lahndi phonetics* and *Lahndi phonology*[7] – the feminine form of the word having replaced Grierson's unfortunate choice of the masculine in later usage.[8] Bahri does, however, make explicit criticisms of Grierson's distinctions between North-Eastern and North-Western Lahnda, which are sufficiently cogent to enable these to be definitively rejected in the form originally stated.

Meanwhile, however, the more sophisticated sections of the three religious communities of the Panjab had been responding, each in a different way, to the challenges presented by imperial rule, the Muslims and Hindus laying emphasis on their respective links with co-religionists outside the Panjab, while the Sikhs, almost entirely confined to the province, came to lay increasing stress on their local identity. This process had important linguistic implications, for a conscious religious identity came to be marked by the convenient symbol of self-identification with one or other language. In very simple terms, this meant that Muslim Panjabi (or Lahndi!) speakers

identified themselves with Urdu as their formal and literary language, the Hindus with Hindi, while only the Sikhs identified with Panjabi. This Sikh Panjabi is hardly older than the century as a written language, and is still not fully standardized, although closely based on the central Majhi dialect.

The growing bitterness of communal feeling eventually led to the partition of the Panjab in 1947, with the virtually complete expulsion of Sikhs and Hindus to India, and of Muslims to Pakistan. After further disputes in India, essentially between Sikh protagonists of Panjabi and Hindu protagonists of Hindi, the small Indian state of Panjab was established with the neo-standard Sikh Panjabi as its official language.[9] This is written in the Gurmukhi script, and reflects in heightened form the differences between Sikh-Hindu and Muslim speech by preferring Sanskritic words to those of Perso-Arabic origin; but it may be noted that it is kept carefully distinct from Hindi, its threateningly closely related neighbour, not only by its script, but also by the deliberate phonetic assimilation of Sanskritic loans.

Especially since the full official recognition of Panjabi, quite considerable resources have become available for linguistic research in Indian Panjab, and some very interesting local dialect studies have been produced.[10] So far, however, the problems of classification for Pakistan Panjab have been less than squarely tackled in India,[11] for several reasons. The most obvious is the virtual sealing of the frontier between the two countries, so that Indian linguists have had no direct access to Pakistan, and descriptions based on refugee speakers are not always reliable, especially since these may themselves be descended from earlier emigrations from eastern districts to the Canal Colonies in the west at the turn of the century. A more important inhibiting factor, though, has probably been the emphasis which, in view of the political circumstances, has quite naturally been laid on differences between Panjabi and Hindi. This emphasis on the distinct status of Panjabi has been further supported by a maximal conception of Panjabi as the single language of undivided Panjab, under which all dialects of the area should properly be classed: this either involves an outright rejection of Grierson's Panjabi-Lahnda division, or, at most, a grudging admission of an imperfectly defined 'Lahndi' sub-group of Panjabi.

In Pakistan Panjab events have followed a quite different course

since 1947. Urdu is not only the national language, but has continued to be used in the province as in British times for most official purposes, as well as being cultivated as the dominant literary medium. For some time, therefore, the official attitude was that Panjabi, in all its varieties, was in effect a dialect of Urdu: this still quite commonly held view is a conception which has naturally discouraged the prosecution of much serious local research.

Even in Pakistan, however, Panjabi is showing signs of breaking out of its previous restriction to the role of an oral medium used in only very limited fashion for writing. A modern literature is beginning to be created in a language very similar in its Majhi dialectal base to that of Indian Panjab, although distinguished from it both by script and choice of vocabulary (recalling the more developed distinctions between Urdu and Hindi). But the enthusiasts for Panjabi in Pakistan, chiefly based in the provincial capital of Lahore,[12] are certainly inspired by the status which what is still seen as a common language has successfully achieved in India: and the Indian conception of Panjabi as the language of the whole Panjab naturally receives an ample welcome from the Pakistani enthusiasts, although in their case it is the distinction of Panjabi from Urdu which they wish to substantiate.

The present situation in Pakistan Panjab has, however, become further complicated by the fact that the movement to enhance the status of the Panjabi of central Panjab has encouraged or provoked the emergence of other movements elsewhere in the province, which seek to promote different languages based on the local dialects. There seem to be at least three of these, for Hindko in the north-west, Pothohari in the north, and Siraiki in the south-west. I have first-hand acquaintance only with the last, which is certainly the best-established. I have described the background and activities of the movement for Siraiki elsewhere.[13] Here it may be enough to say that it derives much of its immediate stimulus from local resentments against the massive immigration of refugees from eastern Panjab in 1947, and supports its claims for the separate identity of Siraiki as a language distinct from Panjabi on the basis of its literary past and of arguments derived from Grierson (or – more eccentrically – on its supposed origins in the conveniently undeciphered language of the Indus Valley seals!). Both sets of criteria may also be advanced in the north, but they are naturally dismissed by enthusiasts for Panjabi in

Pakistan, or in Indian Panjab, where the Panjabi literary tradition is regarded as a unity, and where the *LSI* tends to be seen as an elaborate justification for imperial policies of 'divide and rule'.

So the present local situation is one of confusion and dispute, so far as classifications of dialects and languages are concerned. Nor have confusions of a different sort been avoided in studies produced outside the sub-continent. Smirnov's recent book on *The Lahndi language*[14] takes some note of recent developments in Pakistan, but is basically an uneasy amalgamation of Grierson with Bahri, so that the 'language' described is an unreal composite of Multani and Awankari. Some of the book's defects have been criticized in an article by Rossi,[15] but his own attempts to distinguish more accurately between Lahndi and Panjabi are distorted by his choice of Awankari to represent the one, and of standard Sikh Panjabi for the other.

2. Having outlined the background to the various points of view now current, I should like to suggest that the conflicts are more apparent than real, and can best be resolved by considering all types of language in the area, present and past, by having a clear idea of the nature of the linguistic phenomena under discussion, and by using potentially ambiguous terms, like 'Panjabi' itself, in senses as closely defined as possible.

Three basic viewpoints can be distinguished. There is the 'Indian' reaction to Grierson, denying the existence of any valid category between 'Panjabi' and local dialects; the 'foreign' modification of Grierson's scheme, with Lahndi separated from Panjabi and divided into Northern and Southern, also Central, if Shahpuri is separately so classified; and the emerging 'Pakistani' quadripartite division into Panjabi, Siraiki, Hindko and Pothohari.

The Indian view has been most cogently advanced in the most substantial production of Indian Panjabi linguistics, the Patiala *Linguistic Atlas*,[16] whose detailed maps certainly call into question the validity of the traditional dialect labels of eastern Panjab. But the poor coverage of the crucial western areas does not support the contention that no intermediate categories need to be introduced there either. The objection to the introduction of such terms can only be upheld by reference to the generally admitted fact that in some, not always perfectly defined, ways all varieties of language in the Panjab

are collectively closer to one another than they are to even the most closely related adjacent NIA languages, Sindhi and Western Hindi. So one might speak of 'Panjabi' in this sense as being distinguished by both the retention of MIA combinations of short vowel and medial geminate and the use of /-a/ as the typical masc. sg. termination, as in /ʊcca/ 'high', versus S. /ʊco/, H. /ũca/.[17] While the universal distribution of such features means they cannot be used for internal classifications, they are useful in the wider context of Indo-Aryan, and might best be described by some such label as 'Greater Panjabi'.

The trouble with the second scheme is its misleading opposition between unlike terms. Once deprived of its original justification in the 'Outer Circle' theory, the status of 'Lahndi' is fully exposed by any attempt at a synthetic treatment to be that of a mere label, with no local currency, for a few common features. So the term is best restricted to the occasionally useful labelling of these features, like the sigmatic future, where the widely distributed /asã/ 'I shall come' might be described as 'Lahndi' or 'western', as opposed to 'Panjabi' or 'central' /avãga/.

Panjabi, on the other hand, is certainly to be classed as a language, both on the basis of the numerous features shared by its closely related dialects (however these are themselves to be classified) and given their common literary traditions, so that one can properly speak of the 'Old Panjabi component' of the *Ādi Granth*, modern standard Sikh Panjabi, literary Muslim Panjabi, and so forth.

Further to the west one only starts to encounter sufficient clusters of common features between dialects (whose proper internal classification again depends on better data from the field) and shared literary traditions at the level of the sub-divisions of Lahndi, to be able to move from speaking of labels to languages, in the present context hardly to be distinguished from dialect-groups. Here, however, the Pakistani terms have the advantages of local currency, and of not obscuring genuine problems of classification by imposing an inadequately supported prior terminological grid.

There would be no point in abusing the freedom afforded by the local terms to suggest any rigid scheme for their classification here. It may, however, be helpful to observe that the greatest number of distinctive features are found between the two groups with the best-established literary traditions, Panjabi and Siraiki. Hindko, perhaps the most heterogeneous and certainly the least well described group (except for Awankari), is closer to Siraiki, and Pothohari falls

between Hindko and Panjabi, but is often so close to the latter that any attempt to maintain the Lahndi scheme ought probably to reckon it as 'Lahndi merging into Panjabi'. The circle is completed by the massive immigration of Panjabi-speakers into the Siraiki area, so that the most extreme varieties are paradoxically in the most immediate contact.

Of course, once even these provisional distinctions are made, there are going to be several genuine difficulties of assignment where border dialects are concerned. The most obvious and important instance is Shahpuri, once Grierson's 'Standard Southern Lahnda', then re-labelled 'Central Lahndi', whereas it in fact displays the usual maddening characteristics of a dialect centrally placed between divergent groups, sharing some features with Panjabi, some with Siraiki, as well as having others in common with only the immediately adjacent dialects of all the neighbouring groups. It would now generally be classed as a dialect of Panjabi, partly as a consequence of immigration from the east, and this classification does have the great advantage of better accommodating descriptions of earlier stages of the language, since the 'Old Panjabi' of the *Ādi Granth*[18] incorporates many features now restricted to this area: some of these are found also in later Muslim literature, and have recently come to be more deliberately employed in one school of modern poetry to help make Panjabi appear as distinct as possible from Urdu.

3. I should now like to try and substantiate some of the points so far made in a deliberately general fashion by referring to a few specific features. This concluding discussion is designed firstly to give some idea of the kinds of regional variation encountered in the area; secondly to show that neither the hypothesis of the unity of 'Greater Panjabi' nor the suggestion of the separate linguistic status of 'Lahndi' are very helpful frames of reference, since the evidence often contradicts their own advocates' criteria; and thirdly to demonstrate that present regional variations – especially those involving systematic changes – may often be most easily understood by historical comparison with the hitherto hardly explored Old Panjabi of the *Ādi Granth*. (This is not to assume that this composite language is always a common ancestor of all modern forms: but, conversely, the study of the latter can often help determine more exactly the specific character of Old Panjabi features.)

It is currently fashionable in Indian Panjabi linguistics to support

the claim to the unity of Panjabi on the basis of phonetic features, especially the tones,[19] which were first described by Bailey for Wazirabadi, and figure prominently in most modern dialect descriptions. These tones are of two principal types, a high(-falling) and a low(-rising): both normally occur on the accented syllable of words in pause as reflexes of historical voiced aspiration, which is itself usually lost. The period of origin of the tones cannot be determined from written evidence, since both scripts continue to write the historical aspiration. To describe the stress-accent itself as a third 'mid-tone', found in nearly all other words, seems a somewhat disingenuous way of buttressing the claim of Greater Panjabi to distinction as the only important Indo-Aryan tonal language, and the case must stand or fall by the proven incidence of the first two types.

Unfortunately, the tonal criterion is more satisfactory in an Indian than a Pakistani context. A very large group of dialects, including those of Indian Panjabi, Pakistan Panjabi, and – across the 'Lahndi' line – also Pothohari and Shahpuri, are distinguished by a common tonal pattern. The high tone results from a following historical *h* (in other contexts always voiced), which is lost, so the historical written forms *rahī* 'remained' and *rāh* 'way' represent phonetic /râi, râ/, or from a following historical voiced aspirate, which loses its aspiration, so that written *baddhā* 'bound' and *koṛhā* 'leper' represent phonetic /bâdda, kôṛa/. While this high tone is usually accompanied by some shortening of the tonic vowel, the more distinctive low tone is normally marked by a lengthening of the vowel after slight glottal closure. The low tone results from a preceding historical *h* or voiced aspirate, so written *tihāiā* 'thirsty' and *vadhāiā* 'increased' represent phonetic /vəďăya, tyăya/, with the usual loss of aspiration. When the historical aspirate is initial the treatment is more varied: initial *h* is usually kept, and only sometimes results in the low tone as well, so *hor* 'other' is either phonetic /hor/ or /hŏr/, as in Wazirabadi, but aspiration is otherwise lost, so that *nhāvāṁ* 'let me bathe' yields phonetic /năvā/, and if the voiced aspirate is a plosive, there is loss of voicing as well, so that historical *ghoṛa* 'horse' yields phonetic /kŏṛa/.

Recent Indian linguistic studies would imply that this tonal pattern extends to the Hindko and Siraiki areas as well, whereas in fact they are distinct both from Panjabi-Pothohari and from each other here. It is true that in Hindko a following historical *h* is lost, in favour of the high tone, so written *rahī* and *rāh* again represent phonetic /râi, râ/:

but a following voiced aspirate is usually retained as such without tone, and is only rarely liable to be treated as in Panjabi (e.g., when word-final in Kahuni). The high tone *may* also accompany a preceding voiced aspirate, where Panjabi would have the low tone and loss of both voicing and aspiration, so written *dhovāṁ* 'let me wash' represents Panjabi /tŏvā/, but Hindko /dhôvā, dhovā/. The low tone is thus restricted in Hindko to the very restricted context of accented syllables after a preceding historical non-plosive aspirate, like /nāvā/.

Siraiki is still more distinct, since it lacks either tone, and historical aspiration continues to be realized as such in /rʌhi, rʌh, dhovā/, and the other words cited. Aspiration in Siraiki does have many interesting features, including the loss of aspiration (without tone) after a preceding aspirate of whatever class, the tendency to transfer *h* to adjacent voiced consonants to form voiced aspirates, and the typical shortening of vowel-quantity before /h/,[20] which suggest parallels with the similar effect of high tone elsewhere: but these will hardly allow Siraiki to be accommodated within a Greater Panjabi area supposed to be defined by the existence of tones.[21]

If the tones are separately classed in the usual modern fashion as prosodically contrasting features, Panjabi and Pothohari are left with about 29 consonant-phonemes (by the elimination of historical voiced aspirates), Hindko with about 40, and Siraiki with about 48, including its distinctive implosives. So, while these differences between the three groups are essentially realizational when viewed historically, they do pose great difficulties for any unified description of a supposed Greater Panjabi consonantal phonemic inventory: and since these differences divide Siraiki, Hindko and Pothohari, such a description is equally unjustified for a supposed 'Lahndi' language. A more appropriate picture, suggested by the figures and supported by many other features also, is of a maximal contrast between Siraiki, which has the typical complexities of conservatism, and Panjabi (closely allied to Pothohari), which has many innovating simplifications, with Hindko occupying an intermediate position.

Vowel-inventories are much less varied than those of the consonants, but there is one realizational difference which suggests interesting patterns of historical change. This is the fronting of /ʌ/ before syllable-final /h/, which is regular in Hindi and Urdu, which has /æhməd/ for the Arabic name *Aḥmad*. But there is no such

fronting in Siraiki /ʌhmɔd/, and the older Gurmukhi orthography **ahamadu*, for modern *ahimad*, suggests that the change had not occurred in Old Panjabi either, although all other modern groups have fronting with the usual high tone, as /æ̂mɔd, æ̂mʊd/. Whether this fronting, presumably the result of the spread of a Western Hindi feature, preceded or followed the tonal realization of *h* is a nice historical point. A possible internal reason encouraging the spread of this feature is, moreover, suggested by the single context in Siraiki where fronting before /h/ does occur. This is by regressive vowel-harmony before a following *i*, whether actual or historical: thus OP. *rahaṇu* 'to remain', absolutive *rahi*, correspond to Siraiki /rʌhɔṇ/, but /ræh/, for Panjabi /ræ̂ṇa, ræ̂/.

On the other hand, the normal retention of the back quality of /ʌ/ before /h/ in Siraiki has aided a probably recent development by which historical *āh* has fallen together with *ah*, as a consequence of the shortening of long vowels before /h/. One interesting effect of this development can be appropriately illustrated – in a 'Lahndi' context – by the modern present participles of the OP. stems *lah-* 'descend, set (of the sun)' and *lāh-* 'make descend'. These have regular adjustments in Panjabi to yield phonetic /læ̃da, lɔ̃da/ (for written *lahiṁdā, lāhuṁdā*), while Siraiki originally had the conservative pair /lʌ̃hda/ and /lãhda/: but since the latter would now be homonymous with the intransitive, Siraiki now innovates by applying the distinctive transitive extension to provide the modern contrast between /lʌ̃hda/ and /ləhẽda/. A similarly unusual distinguishing of Siraiki by innovation is to be seen in words where fronting is also involved: thus Arabic *ṣāḥib* 'master' appears in OP. as *sāhabu* or *sāhibu*, and the former yields modern /sâb/ in all other groups, whereas the latter gives Siraiki /sæhɪb/, since the shortening of the historical long *ā* before *h* means that it has become liable to fronting before the following *i*.

A different modern regional distinction also foreshadowed by OP. alternants is found in the unextended declension of masculine nouns, as illustrated by OP. *hatthu* 'hand'. This is inflected either as sg. obl. (and pl. dir.) *hattha*, sg. l-in. *hatthi*, all corresponding, after the universal loss of the OP. final short vowels, to Panjabi and Siraiki /hʌth/, or as sg. obl. *hatthai*, l-in. *hatthe*, yielding as synonymous regional variants the Hindko-Pothohari forms of the sg. obl. /hʌtthe, (hʌtthæ)/. This extended form of the sg. obl. seems to be the

one common feature that can be used to suggest that Hindko and Pothohari form a 'Northern Lahndi' group, and it is hardly sufficient to override the great number of features shared by Pothohari alone with Panjabi.

Now Grierson, as a Kashmiri specialist, was particularly interested in finding what he supposed to be 'substratal Dardic influences' in his 'Lahnda'. He therefore gave great prominence to the special treatment of disyllabic descendants of this unextended declension in his 'Standard Lahnda' of Shahpur,[22] which suggested to him an obvious parallel with the massive vowel-harmonies that characterize the declension of most unextended masculines in Kashmiri. Indeed, such prominence is given to this declension that it appears in Grierson's account to be a major shibboleth between Lahndi and Panjabi, although its partial presence only in some varieties of the former is noted. In fact, the declension proper seems to cover only a quite small area, but it does raise interesting wider questions which do not seem to have been comprehensively noticed hitherto.

The nouns in question are of the disyllabic type represented in OP. by *jaṅgalu* 'forest', sg. obl. and pl. dir. *jaṅgala*, sg. loc. *jaṅgali*, all resulting in Panjabi /jʌŋgʊl/, southern Siraiki /jʌŋgəl/, whereas in Shahpuri case-distinctions are maintained in spite of the loss of final short vowels by the effects of regressive vowel-harmony, as /jʌŋgʊl, jʌŋgəl, jʌŋgɪl/. The same declension is also found in Thali, the northern dialect of Siraiki, where the Persian loan *shahr* 'city' is also subject to vowel-harmony in the tonic syllable before medial /h/, and is inflected as /ʃɔhʊr, ʃʌhər, ʃæhɪr/: this appears in Shahpuri with tonal assimilation as /ʃôr, ʃâr, ʃæ̂r/ (for Panjabi /ʃæ̂r/ throughout). The Shahpuri declension of words of this type extends also into Hindko, at least Awankari. But this is the limit of the declension in its full form.

It would, in fact, appear that the development of this declension, in which cases are marked by internal vowel-alternation, has been due less to any substratal influence than to the central position of Shahpuri and Thali between areas which show marked preferences for one or other of the three short vowels in post-tonic closed syllables in many classes of words.

While the resolution of many final consonant clusters by svarabhakti is a Greater Panjabi feature, the choice of anaptyctic vowel sharply distinguishes Panjabi and Pothohari, with /ə/, from Hindko,

at least Awankari, with /ʊ/, whereas in the main Siraiki dialects of Multani and Bahawalpuri the choice of vowel is frequently determined by progressive vowel-harmony from the tonic syllable; so the Perso-Arabic loans *garm* 'hot', *fikr* 'worry', and *shukr* 'thanks' appear as Panjabi /gʌrəm, fɪkər, ʃʊkər/, Awankari /gʌrʊm, fɪkʊr, ʃʊkʊr/, but Siraiki /gʌrəm, fɪkɪr, ʃʊkʊr/. Original clusters of dental plosive + *r* are, however, maintained even finally in Siraiki, where OP. *putru* 'son', pl. *putra*, appear as /pʊtr/, for Panjabi /pʊttər/ and Awankari /pʊttʊr/, distinguished in Shahpuri as sg. /pʊttʊr/ versus pl. /pʊttər/.

Where original vowels, normally *a* or *i*, are concerned, the contrasts are still more striking. Panjabi and Pothohari normally have /ə/ for both vowels, a similar reduction of *i* to /ə/ also being usual in pretonic syllables in these groups, with their marked stress-accent, whereas Hindko (Awankari) normally has /ʊ/, probably due first to regressive vowel-harmony from a lost historical final *u*, subsequently extended to many other forms originally having other short vowels finally. But Siraiki typically conserves original distinctions, so that Arabic *ḥākim* 'official' is kept as Siraiki /hakɪm/, for Panjabi /hakəm/ and Awankari /hakʊm/. This may be compared with feminines of the common pattern illustrated by Siraiki /dhobɪṇ/ 'washerman's wife', versus Panjabi /tŏbəṇ/ and Awankari /dhobʊṇ/, where the maintenance of the original vowel in Siraiki has contributed to the continued vitality of the feminine *i*-declension.

But where historical *a* was followed by a now lost final *i*, this is now regularly realized, by regressive vowel-harmony, as Siraiki /ɪ/. Thus the OP. sg. dir. *andaru* 'inner part', with the specialized loc. *andari* 'inside', are still distinguished in Siraiki as /ʌndər/ and /ʌndɪr/, whereas they have elsewhere fallen together as Panjabi /ʌndər/, Awankari /ʌndʊr/. A similar alternation also marks distinctions of gender in a small class of animates, as in Thali /chohʊr/, Multani /chohər/, Bahawalpuri /chuhʊr/ 'boy', versus feminine /chohɪr, chuhɪr/ 'girl', with pl. in /-ī/: elsewhere the feminine must be marked by extension, so /chôr/ 'boy' contrasts with /chôri/ 'girl', with pl. in /-ā/, thus eliminating another class of words from the *i*-declension.

Parts of the verbal conjugation are also significantly affected by these general patterns of phonological change. They appear, for instance, in the absolutive of such disyllabic stems as *nikal-* 'go out', which was *nikali* in OP., now extended as /nɪkḷi/ in Pothohari, but Panjabi /nɪkəḷ/, versus Hindko /nɪkʊḷ/, Siraiki /nɪkɪl/.

In the 3 pl. of the old present OP. has the usual termination *-anhi*, for OIA *-anti*. All modern groups, where the tense is now a subjunctive, lose the final short vowel and the aspiration of this termination. Siraiki has the predictable alteration of the post-tonic vowel, so that OP. *ākhani*, *karanhi* appear as /akhɪn/ 'let them say', and /kʌrɪn/ 'let them do': stems in /ʌh/ undergo the regular fronting of the tonic vowel before the following /ɪ/, so OP. *rahanhi* appears as Siraiki /ræhɪn/ 'let them remain'. Other changes are not predictable from the general rule, however. Shahpuri shares Siraiki /akhɪn/, but for /kʌrɪn/ has /kəren/, the descendant of the OP. extended alternant *karenhi*. Other groups all keep the original vowel, so that Hindko has /akhən/ and /kʌrən/ for the expected forms with /-ʊ-/: but Panjabi and Pothohari have changed the dental to a retroflex in /akhəṇ/, though this does not occur where the stem ends in /ṇ ṛ r/, hence /kʌrən/.

These last forms are interesting examples of the typical tendency of these groups to simplify by the levelling of historically distinct forms, in this case the 3 pl. of the present and the oblique infinitive. In OP. the infinitive is normally distinguished as an unextended masc. noun from the extended adjectival gerundive, so *ākhaṇu* 'to say', versus *ākhaṇā* 'deserving to be said'. The latter is still distinguished as /akhṇa/ from Siraiki /akhəṇ/ and Shahpuri and Thali dir. /akhʊṇ/, obl. /akhəṇ/. Elsewhere, however, the extended gerundive /akhṇa/ has been generalized for the dir. infinitive also. But for the obl. Panjabi still keeps the old /akhəṇ/, identical with the 3 pl. The same form seems to appear in set phrases in other groups, as in Pothohari /akhəṇ lʌgg-/, Hindko /akhəṇ lʌgg-/ 'begin to say': but these are probably for the OP. locative construction *ākhaṇi lagg-*, since both groups have their regular extension of the obl. as /akhṇe/ in other contexts.

All groups have dissimilation of the historical retroflex in the infinitive and gerundive after stems with final /ṇ ṛ/. This dissimilation is regular after stems with final /r/ also, except in the Siraiki and Shahpuri dir. infinitive and the Shahpuri and Hindko obl. infinitive, which appear as /kʌrəṇ, kʌrʊṇ/, versus the univeral /kʌrna/, whereas, Panjabi and Pothohari have the obl. infinitive /kʌrən/, again identical with the 3 pl. present.

The loss of OP. aspiration in the 3 pl. was passed over without comment, but is actually part of a noteworthy general change, since OP. *-h-*, as the derivative of older intervocalic consonants, has normally been lost in terminations, thus avoiding the awkward shifts of accent in inflectional patterns which would otherwise have resulted from its contemporary tonal realization.[23]

There are only two exceptions to this general rule. The first is minor, involving only the treatment of monosyllabic vowel-stems in the sg. imperative in Panjabi and Pothohari, where the OP. sg. imperative *dehi, dehu* 'give!' is still /dê/ with high tone, for Hindko /de/, Siraiki /de/, where there is no trace of the original aspirate.

The second, rather more interesting, exception concerns the 1 pl. of the present. OP. had distinctive terminations for each person and number in this tense, and most modern groups are distinguished from, say, Hindi by their continuing preference for such distinctive forms. All groups have retained the OP. 1 sg. *-āṁ*, but the OP. 1 pl. *-aṁhā* has been fully preserved only in Shahpuri and the southern dialects of Hindko, as /-ã̂/, with high tone and consequent shift of accent to the termination, so 1 sg. /akhã/ 'let me say' and /kʌrã/ 'let me do', but 1 pl. /əkhã̂, kərã̂/. In Pothohari the aspiration is lost, avoiding the awkward shift of accent, so that the 1 pl. is now identical with the 1 sg., while Panjabi innovates by transference from the OP. 3 sg. passive, to yield the distinctive forms /akhɪe, kʌrɪe/, from OP. *ākhīai* 'it is to be said', *karīai* 'it is to be done'. Confusion between the numbers is avoided in Siraiki, which shares a distinctive termination, in /-ũ/, with Sindhi, so 1 pl. /akhũ, kʌrũ/.

The terminations of the future, however formed, are normally identical with those of the present, so Multani has 1 sg. /akhsã/ 'I shall say', versus 1 pl. /akhsũ/, extended in Bahawalpuri as /əkhesã, əkhesũ/. Shahpuri and southern Hindko have maintained the historically entailed shift of accent, as 1 sg. /akhsã/ versus 1 pl. /əkhsã̂/, while Pothohari again allows an identity of forms, with /akhsã/ for both numbers. But the northern Hindko of Peshawar recalls the Panjabi adjustment of the present, having 1 sg. /akhsã/, but 1 pl. /akhsɪẽ/, while Panjabi itself – lacking the sigmatic future – is paradoxically able to keep the historical personal termination and to mark distinctions of number by inflection of the suffix, so 1 sg. masc. /akhãga/, versus 1 pl. /akhãge/. Just to make things still more interesting, only slightly further to the east the 1 sg. termination /-ũ/, so characteristic of Hindi, begins to appear, so that 1 sg. /akhũga/ is opposed to 1 pl. /akhãge/, precisely the reverse of the Siraiki distinction between the two numbers!

It would be quite possible to continue at some length weaving such superficially complex patterns, but any further elaboration might defeat my purpose here, which has been to try to clarify rather than to confuse.

I hope that the limited survey which I have been able to undertake will have been sufficient to put at least some of the flesh of detail on the arid classificatory schemes which I felt obliged to begin by discussing at such length. This has been very much an interim report, but it may have given some inkling of the sort of linguistic picture of the area which might one day emerge when the real problems of classification are properly examined in the light of both the contemporary and the historical evidence, without being constantly befogged by the pseudo-problems introduced by prematurely formed classificatory schemes or prejudiced reactions to them.

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Notes

1. Details of these works, all of which appeared between 1881 and 1903, are given in the bibliography in my reference grammar, *The Siraiki language of central Pakistan*, London 1976.
2. T. G. Bailey, *Panjābī grammar*, Lahore 1904; *A Panjabi phonetic reader*, London 1914: *The languages of the northern Himalayas*, London 1908; *Linguistic studies from the Himalayas*, London 1915.
3. G. A. Grierson (ed.), *Linguistic Survey of India* [*LSI*], vol. ix, part I, *Western Hindī and Pañjābī*, Calcutta 1916; vol. viii, part I, *Sindhī and Lahndā*, Calcutta 1919. The maps in these volumes still form the basis of most descriptions of the area in general linguistic works.
4. It first appears, as 'Lahindā', in W. Tisdall, *A simplified grammar and reading book of the Panjabi language*, London 1889: cf. *LSI*, viii, I, 234.
5. B. D. Jain, *A phonology of Panjābī as spoken about Ludhiānā and a Ludhiānī phonetic reader*, Lahore 1934: P. Bahl, *Etude de phonétique historique et expérimentale des consonnes injectives du multani (dialecte panjabi occidentale)*, Paris 1936.
6. S. Varma, 'The phonetics of Lahnda', *JRASB*, letters, ii, 1936, 47–118.
7. H. Bahri, *Lahndi phonetics* [*with special reference to Awáṇkári*], Allahabad 1963; *Lahndi phonology* [*with special reference to Awáṇkári*], Allahabad 1962: these form two parts of a thesis submitted in 1944.
8. Grierson's masculine was immediately challenged by Bailey on the sensible

grounds that Indian language-names are usually feminine: the curious may care to consult the ensuing disputation in *BSOS* 5 (1928–30), 615–8, 883–7; 6 (1930–32), 273. Bailey's objection has certainly been vindicated by later Panjabi usage, where *lahindī* is the regular Gurmukhī form.

9. The course of the increasing Sikh identification with Panjabi throughout the period is most illuminatingly traced in P. R. Brass, *Language, religion and politics in North India*, Cambridge 1974, part IV.

10. H. S. Gill and H. A. Gleason, *A reference grammar of Punjabi*, 2nd edn., Patiala 1969, describes both the modern standard and the Majhi dialect on which it is principally based: also to be noted is B. S. Sandhu, 'A descriptive grammar of Puadī', *Parkh* 1968, II, 1–120. Other titles may be found in the bibliography attached to K. C. Bahl, 'Panjabi', in T. Sebeok (ed.), *Current trends in linguistics, 5, Linguistics in South Asia*, The Hague 1969, 196–200.

11. This criticism attaches to most general surveys, of the kind undertaken in, e.g., Atam Singh, 'An introduction to the dialects of Punjabi', *Pākha Sanjam* 3, 1–2 (1970), 120–52, or Prem Prakash Singh, 'Pañjābī diāṁ upbāshāvāṁ dā saṅkhep sarvekhaṇ', *Khoj Darpan* 4, 1 (1977), 122–49.

12. Described in my article 'Punjabi in Lahore', *Modern Asian Studies* 4 (1970), 239–267.

13. In 'Siraiki: a language movement in Pakistan', *Modern Asian Studies* 11 (1977), 379–403.

14. U. A. Smirnov, *The Lahndi language*, Moscow 1975, in the 'Languages of Asia and Africa' series: the English translation omits the map given on p. 11 of the original Russian edition, *Yazuik Lendi*, Moskva 1970.

15. A. V. Rossi, 'La posizione del "lahndi" e la situazione linguistica nel Panjab Pakistano', *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* 34, N.S. 24 (1974), 347–65.

16. H. S. Gill (ed.), *Linguistic atlas of the Panjab*, Patiala 1975, especially p. ii.

17. Or by such basic lexical differences as P. /tʊs-/ 'you(pl.)', versus S. /tʌvh-/, H. /tʊm-/: P. /vɪc~bɪc~ɪc/ 'in', versus S., H. /mẽ/. There are several morphological shibboleths, like the almost universal /-ã/ as the marker of the pl. obl. and 1 sg. Syntactic features are more difficult to isolate, but perhaps the preference for the reversal of order in periphrastic tenses formed with the past auxiliary might qualify: thus H. /jata tha/, Panjabi /jāda si/, Siraiki /vẽda ha/ '(he) was going', with negative H. /nʌhī jata tha/, versus Panjabi /nʌĩ si jāda/, Siraiki /nʌha vẽda/.

18. I have discussed aspects of the languge of the *Ādi Granth* in '"South-Western" elements in the language of the *Ādi Granth*', *BSOAS* 40, 1 (1977), 36–50; 'Approaches to the Persian loans in the *Ādi Granth*', *BSOAS* 41, 1 (1978), 73–96; 'The Sahaskritī poetic idiom in the *Ādi Granth*', *BSOAS* 41, 2 (1978), 297–313.

19. The first intimations of this reliance on the tones to distinguish Panjabi from Hindi are to be found in the pioneering study of B. D. Jain, 'Isophones of the Orthographic *gh*, *bh*-, *dh*-, etc., and of *h*- in the Ambala District', *BSOS* 7, 2 (1934), 329–333.

20. Cf. *The Siraiki language*, 30–6.

21. The tones also extend to the north of the area, as into the Dardic Ṣiṇā and much of the Western Pahari region.

22. Cf. *LSI*, viii, I, 235–6, etc.

23. Cf. the general discussion in R. L. Turner, 'The phonetic weakness of terminational elements in Indo-aryan', *JRAS* 2 (1927), 227–39; reprinted in *Collected Papers 1912–1973*, London 1975, 291–300.

ASPECTS OF VERBAL AFFIXATION IN ABKHAZ (ABŽUI DIALECT)*

By B. G. Hewitt

Of the N(orth) W(est) C(aucasian) languages Ubykh is, paradoxically, perhaps the best documented in western linguistic literature thanks mainly to the enormous efforts over the last half century by the distinguished Caucasologist, Georges Dumézil – paradoxically, because Ubykh is spoken by no more than a handful of the descendants of the Ubykh people who migrated *en masse* to Turkey following the final subjugation of the North Caucasus by Russia in 1864. Of the NWC languages still spoken in the Caucasus itself, Circassian, represented by its two chief dialectal groups – W. Circassian (or Adyghe) and E. Circassian, is easily the more widespread.[1] The final language of the group, and the one to be discussed below, is Abkhaz. The Abkhaz literary language is based on the southern dialect, Abžui, and it is this form of the language that is reflected in the following discussion. The most divergent dialect of the Abkhaz sub-group is T'ap'anta Abaza, which also has the status of a literary language in the USSR. As will be seen later, there are grounds for supposing that T'ap'anta requires separate treatment with regard to the central point at issue in this paper (cf. footnote 15), which reduces to this simple question – in the presence of the reciprocal affix *-aiba-* where is the subject-affix?

In order to render the nature of the problem more readily apparent, it is necessary to begin with a presentation of the basic structure of the Abkhaz 'verbal complex' (for the term see Allen, 1956:128–9). Abkhaz has no case-inflections to differentiate between subjects (S), direct objects (DO) and indirect objects (IO).[2] Nor is word-order a reliable guide to the roles played by the various NPs forming the arguments of the verb, for, whilst the preferred order will be S–IO–DO–V, stylistic variations may alter this. The required information is recoverable only from the affixal structure of the verbal complex. It follows, therefore, that there will be three sets of affixes correspond-